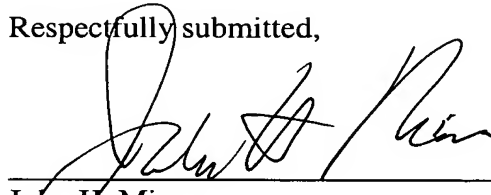


PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

**REMARKS**

The above amendments have been made to eliminate the improper multiple dependencies of claims 8 and 11, thereby ensuring examination of all of claims 1-16 on the merits in the first Office Action.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John H. Mion", is written over a horizontal line.

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Date: October 28, 2003